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Water Levels for the Great Lakes and Montreal Harbour ... *a monthly bulletin from Canadian Hydrographic Service*

About the monthly Water Level bulletin

May Precipitation Over the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term May average:

Great Lakes Basin	103%
Lake Erie (including Lake St. Clair)	93%
Lake Superior	135%
Lakes Michigan-Huron	100%
Lake Ontario	60%

Note: These figures are preliminary.

May Outflows From the Great Lakes

LEVEL news

Volume 7, Number 6 **June 7, 1999**

Seasonal Rise Stalls on Middle Lakes

Water Levels Drop at Montréal Harbour

Lakes Superior and Ontario monthly mean water levels rose about 8 cm from April to May, while smaller increases on the middle lakes suggest their seasonal rise has stalled. Water levels dropped significantly at Montréal Harbour.

Precipitation on the Lake Superior basin caused water levels to rise steadily during the latter part of May. The lake's monthly mean level increased by about its usual amount for this time of year. At the beginning of June the lake remains about 17 cm below its long-term average, but levels have increased to above chart datum.

Despite precipitation received over the Victoria Day weekend, the middle lakes experienced lower than average increases during May. Daily levels actually fell slightly during parts of the month. Mean monthly levels on Lakes Michigan-Huron and Erie increased by just 4 and 3 cm, respectively, compared to last month. Lake St. Clair's level remains virtually unchanged. On average, these three lakes rise between 8 and 10 cm at this time of year.

Although Lake Ontario's May level was 8 cm higher than April's it usually increases by about 13 cm at this time of year. At the beginning of June, Lakes Michigan-Huron and Ontario were between 25 and 30 cm below their long-term averages. Lakes St. Clair and Erie were 5 to 10 cm below their averages.

Montréal Harbour's mean level fell about 1.2 m from April to May. The harbour's May level was more than 1.7 m below average and was a new record low since 1967 for the month. This level is close to the low experienced in 1964. By the end of the May, the harbour's level was about 10 cm below chart datum.

Lower Water Levels Mean New Hazards

A recent letter to the Opinions page of The Hamilton Spectator highlighted a hazard often forgotten when discussing the recent drop in Great Lakes water levels. With youngsters about to begin enjoying their summer vacations, the author of the letter wanted to warn children and those responsible for their well-being, of the danger they face with water levels down significantly from last year.

As a percentage of the long-term May average:

Lake Superior 72%

Lake Erie 99%

Lake Huron 95%

Lake Ontario 87%

Note: These figures are preliminary.

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Summary information for "LEVEL*news*"

Running off the dock or down the beach for that first dive of the year can result in serious, permanent damage to the head, neck and back. With levels much lower than last year, it is imperative that anyone responsible for children—parents, grandparents and camp counsellors—make them aware that as much as 65 cm of water is not there due to the dry conditions we are currently experiencing. Please check where the rocks are for swimming as well as boating and have a fun-filled, accident-free summer.

Level News is grateful to Mr. K. B. Paulin, of Burlington, for allowing us to share his timely message here.

Accessing Water Level Data by Telephone

Present water levels on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River are available from a network of gauging stations operated by the Canadian Hydrographic Service. Phone numbers for the stations are listed below. When you call a particular station, the answering equipment will ask you to press 1 for English or 2 for French, on the keypad of your touch-tone phone. If you do not have a touch-tone phone, the message will start after a few seconds delay. The present water level is given in metres relative to chart datum at that station. Next the message gives the high and low water levels recorded during the previous 12 hours, followed by the elevation of chart datum. You can press 1 or 2 at any time during the message to have it start again, or press 0 to end the call. Call (905) 336-4844 (fax: (905)-336-8916 or e-mail: solvasonr@dfo-mpo.gc.ca) to report any problems or to obtain additional information.

Lake Superior	at Thunder Bay	(807) 344-3141
	at Rossport	(807) 824-2250
	at Michipicoten	(705) 949-1886
	at Gros Cap	(705) 779-2052
St. Marys River	above the lock	(705) 949-2066
	below the lock	(705) 254-7989
North Channel	at Thessalon	(705) 842-2215
	at Little Current	(705) 368-3695
Georgian Bay	at Parry Sound	(705) 746-6544
	at Collingwood	(705) 445-8737
Lake Huron	at Tobermory	(519) 596-2085
	at Goderich	(519) 524-8058
St. Clair River	at Point Edward	(519) 344-0263
	at Port Lambton	(519) 677-4092
Lake St. Clair	at Belle River	(519) 728-2882
Detroit River	at Amherstburg	(519) 736-4357
Lake Erie	at Bar Point	(519) 736-7488

	at Kingsville	(519) 733-4417
	at Erieau	(519) 676-1915
	at Port Stanley	(519) 782-3866
	at Port Dover	(519) 583-2259
	at Port Colborne	(905) 835-2501
Lake Ontario	at Port Weller	(905) 646-9568
	at Burlington	(905) 544-5610
	at Toronto	(416) 868-6026
	at Cobourg	(905) 372-6214
	at Kingston	(613) 544-9264
St. Lawrence River	at Brockville	(613) 345-0095
	at Iroquois above lock	(613) 652-4426
	at Iroquois below lock	(613) 652-4839
	at Morrisburg	(613) 543-3361
	at Cornwall	(613) 930-9373
	at Summerstown	(613) 931-2089

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